



National Institute of Justice

S o l i c i t a t i o n

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National Evaluation of the Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

June 8, 1998

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National Evaluation of the Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program

I. Introduction

Proposals are solicited for a national evaluation of the Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program, a discretionary program administered by the Office of Justice Programs, Violence Against Women Grants Office. One national evaluation grant of up to \$375,000 will be awarded in FY98, with supplemental funding of up to \$325,000 for subsequent years, for a total project funding level of up to \$700,000. The duration of the national evaluation is up to 36 months with reports of evaluation results to be submitted annually.

II. Background

The Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program (42 U.S.C. § 13971) implements certain provisions of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which was enacted in September 1994 as Title IV of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994.

NIJ is streamlining its process to accommodate the volume of proposals anticipated under the various Crime Act solicitations. Researchers can help in a significant way by sending NIJ a nonbinding letter of intent by May 15, 1998. The Institute will use these letters to forecast the size of the peer panel needed and to identify conflicts of interest among potential reviewers. There are two ways to send these letters. You can reach NIJ by Internet by sending e-mail to tellnij@ncjrs.org and identifying the solicitation. You can call Bernard Auchter at the National Institute of Justice at 202 307-0154.

The primary purpose of the Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program (hereinafter referred to as the Rural Program) is to increase the safety of abused women and children living in rural areas by creating or enhancing collaborative partnerships between criminal justice agencies, victim services providers and community organizations in order to respond to violent crimes committed against women and children and to provide services to the victims of such violence.

The Rural Program provides financial assistance to States, Indian tribal governments, local governments of rural States, and other public or private entities of rural States. The Program reflects a firm commitment toward working to change the criminal justice system's response to violence that occurs when any woman is threatened or assaulted by someone with whom she has or has had an intimate relationship or with whom she was previously acquainted. In addition, it reflects a growing understanding of the impact of domestic violence upon children and recognizes the need to enhance the response of rural communities to sexually and physically abused children.

The Violence Against Women Grants Office is now in the third year of administering the Rural Program. Twenty-six grants were awarded in FY96 and twenty were awarded in FY97 under the program. Programmatic funding for the first two years totaled \$15 million, and FY98 funding was announced at \$25 million with a March 27, 1998 due date.

The Rural Program provides a unique opportunity for law enforcement and prosecution agencies, the courts, non-governmental victim services agencies, community organizations, and businesses in rural communities to collaborate in

creating protocols and strategies tailored specifically to meet the needs and enhance the safety of abused women and children living in rural jurisdictions. The goals of the Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program are to:

- ! Develop and implement policies, protocols, and services designed to promote the early identification, intervention, and prevention of battering of women and child victimization;
- ! Increase victims' safety and access to services, such as shelter, counseling and advocacy;
- ! Enhance the investigation and prosecution of crimes of domestic violence committed against women and child abuse cases; and
- ! Develop and implement innovative, comprehensive strategies that draw on a rural jurisdiction's unique characteristics and resources to enhance community members' understanding of the phenomenon of crimes of domestic violence committed against women and child victimization and to work together to prevent such violence.

To accomplish these goals, the Program encourages rural and tribal criminal justice practitioners to work in partnership with social services agencies, local service providers and community leaders to send a strong message that crimes of domestic violence against women and child victimization are serious criminal offenses that will not be tolerated, and that ending such violence is the responsibility of the entire community. The creation of partnerships that include nonprofit and governmental agencies, as well as local volunteer and membership organizations, are encouraged under the program to augment available resources and enhance the capacity of rural jurisdictions to respond to crimes of domestic violence committed against women and child victimization incidents.

In FY98 OJP is especially interested in supporting new projects or the continuation or expansion of currently funded Rural projects that fall within the special interest program categories listed below.

1. Decreasing the Impact of Geographic Isolation on the Victim and on the Criminal Justice System in Order to Enhance Victim Services.
2. Developing a Coordinated Community Response to Crimes of Domestic Violence committed against women and Child Victimization.
3. Implementation of Policies and Protocols to Enhance the Criminal Justice Response to Victims of Domestic Violence and Child Victimization.
4. Developing Partnerships Among Child Protection Workers, Victim Advocates and the Criminal Justice System.
5. Serving Diverse and Traditionally Underserved Populations in Rural Communities.
6. Increasing Enforcement of Intra- and Interstate Protective Orders.

A listing of the Rural Program Grants awarded in FY 96 and FY97 is provided at the end of this solicitation. Additional background information on the purpose and goals of the Rural Program and the project summaries of the grants that have been awarded are available at the VAWGO Homepage on the World Wide Web at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawgo/rural.htm>.

III. NIJ's Solicitation for a National Rural Evaluation

This announcement solicits proposals for a National Evaluation of the Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program from FY96 to FY98. A multi-method evaluation including both quantitative and qualitative approaches is required. Evaluating

effectiveness and capturing the voices of the victims will both be essential components. One grant of up to \$375,000 will be awarded in FY98, with supplemental funding of up to \$325,000 for subsequent years, for a total project funding level of up to \$700,000. The duration of the project will be up to 36 months.

With the inclusion of the Rural Program under the VAWA, Congress acknowledged the special needs of rural jurisdictions concerning crimes of domestic violence committed against women and child abuse by authorizing a program to encourage a full range of activities including: cooperative projects between law enforcement, prosecution, advocates for battered women and children, and others; treatment and counseling for victims; and community education and prevention efforts. A diverse group of projects has been funded under the FY96 and FY97 Rural Programs. These projects vary by size and number of components or purposes of the project, and include projects for Native Americans and other rural areas.

National Rural Evaluation (NRE) Objectives

- ! To provide a national program-level process and impact evaluation of the FY96 to FY98 Rural Program,
- ! To advance our understanding of rural domestic violence and child abuse and accompanying theory, and
- ! To inform policy and practice in rural areas with an improved understanding of interventions for these crimes.

Key Phases of the National Rural Evaluation

- ! **Planning Phase** - The first two to three months of the project will be used to refine the evaluation plan. Evaluators will work closely with NIJ and VAWGO to further develop their evaluative approach, obtain information critical to the evaluation, and coordinate with related activities such as the planned Rural Program Technical Assistance Project and related rural programs.

- ! **Descriptive Phase** - This phase will involve a thorough descriptive analysis of the problems being addressed and the projects being supported by the Rural Program, including the processes undertaken in formulating the projects. This phase may involve developing a typology or a categorization scheme to compare and contrast projects and devising a sampling plan for more intensive measurement of outcomes.

Questions applicants should address in their proposals for this phase include, but are not limited to: Were the projects implemented as planned? Did the projects create or enhance collaborative partnerships between criminal justice agencies and service providers? What problems did jurisdictions encounter and how were they addressed? How have project designs addressed key concerns of safety and protection for rural women and children? How do projects in the Rural Program compare to those rural projects supported by related Federal programs?¹ Who is being served by these projects? What policies or protocols have been implemented, and services or training provided by the projects?

- ! **Impact Assessment Phase** - This phase will focus on outcomes of projects in a sample of jurisdictions. Integrated with the descriptive component, this phase will provide the overall evaluation of the Rural Program and will also provide feedback to the projects for improvements.

Questions applicants should address in this phase include, but are not limited to: To what extent have projects attained the goals of the program? Has the project had an impact on the larger community? How have victims been served and how have their lives been affected by the services? How have the criminal and civil

¹See related Federal Programs under Context of the Rural Program in this solicitation.

justice systems been enhanced and how have case indicators (such as reports, arrests, prosecutions, convictions, sentences) been affected by the project? Did the project initiate or lead to better coordination between the relevant community agencies and organizations? Have there been any unintended consequences resulting from the projects?

Relevant Literature

Although the existing research and evaluation literature on rural child victimization and crimes of domestic violence committed against women is very limited, NRE applicants are encouraged to discuss available relevant research and evaluation results and to consult the several reports of the National Research Council concerning child abuse, violence against women, and family violence.² In addition to providing a review and assessment of the research, these publications identify and recommend needed research. While child victimization and crimes of domestic violence committed against women in rural communities may have some unique characteristics, an understanding of the broader literature on victimization of women and children will provide a useful basis for examining the Rural Program.

The unique circumstances of battered women and children in rural areas are noted in the program announcements of the Violence Against Women

Grants Office. Included among these circumstances are: the geographic isolation and stronger social and cultural pressures in rural communities and the difficulty of transportation with scarce public transportation and longer distances. Also, the unique circumstances of rural communities complicate the ability of the criminal justice system to investigate and prosecute crimes of domestic violence committed against women and child victimization cases, and they create difficulties for victim services providers to identify and assist abused women and children.³

The literature discussed by the applicant should inform the perspective to be taken in the evaluation. A description of the rural child victimization and domestic violence problem and the theoretical perspective that will influence the evaluation should be presented by the applicant.

Methodological Issues

The challenge of conducting an evaluation of a multifaceted program operating in diverse rural communities throughout the nation is recognized. Thus, applicants should present a thorough plan for how the National Rural Evaluation will be rigorously conducted. Proposals should address contextual factors, sources of data and collection methods, sampling procedures, evaluation design and measurement issues, analysis plans, and report writing and other feedback mechanisms.

The use of multiple methods is seen as critical in conducting the NRE. Qualitative approaches should capture the voices of the victims as well as the views of practitioners and service providers. NRE applicants should consider the ways in which victims/clients, service providers and criminal justice practitioners will be brought into the evaluation process.

²National Research Council, 1993, *Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect*, Panel on Research on Child Abuse and Neglect, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press; National Research Council, 1996, *Understanding Violence Against Women*, N.A. Crowell and A.W. Burgess, eds. Panel on Research on Violence Against Women, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press; and National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 1998, *Violence in Families: Assessing Prevention and Treatment Programs*, R. Chalk and P. King, eds. Committee on the Assessment of Family Violence Interventions, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press. These are available for sale from the National Academy Press at 800 624-6242 or 202 334-3313.

³The Fiscal Year 1998 Application Kit for the Rural Domestic Violence & Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program is available at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawgo/rural/rural2.txt or by contacting the Response Center for a printed copy at 800 421-6770.

Context of the Rural Program. While the availability and accessibility of child victimization and battered women services in rural areas are considered to be comparatively lower than that of urban areas, NRE applicants should have an understanding of the resource context in which the Rural projects operate. Other governmental or private programs may exist in the same jurisdiction as the Rural projects being assessed. The NRE evaluators will need to take these related programs, with similar goals, into account. Among the governmental programs that may be of relevance are: the STOP Violence Against Women Program, the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act Programs, Programs under the Victims of Crime Act, Children's Advocacy Centers, state and local Child Fatality Review efforts, and other ongoing state and local programs.

Other important contextual factors include state legislation relevant to Rural Program issues, relevant state and local policies and practices, and current services available to rural victims of child victimization and domestic violence. These would include availability and access to services such as emergency housing, advocacy, counseling, legal services, and child welfare services.

Data Sources and Collection. Applicants are encouraged to be comprehensive and innovative in the collection and use of data for the evaluation. Various types of data should be considered, including official records; interviews, surveys or focus groups with key populations of relevance to the Rural Program; and observation. Official data should consider calls to the police or sheriff, number of beds in accessible emergency facilities, domestic violence and child victimization arrests, misdemeanors and felonies charged that involve a battered woman or abused child as the victim, declination rates for these cases, and sentences.

Sampling. Sampling should be thoroughly discussed. The initial phase of the NRE would be descriptive and include all FY96 to FY98 projects supported by the Rural Program, and a sample of

the projects or types of projects would be selected for more intensive evaluation and to assess impact. While the conduct of the first phase will inform selection for the second phase, applicants should discuss issues they view as critical in regard to sampling procedures for projects and particular populations within projects (victims, criminal justice practitioners, service providers).

Evaluation Design and Measurement.

Applicants should thoroughly describe and justify the particular design proposed for this process and outcome evaluation. What design will be used to best estimate the impact of the intervention? How will change be measured and attributed to the project? How will terms be defined and measurement instruments selected or developed? Will measures in the community prior to implementation and post implementation be obtained? If so, what is expected to be available? Will comparison groups be used? If so, how will they be obtained? Do the different types of projects under the Rural Program suggest different types of designs to assess outcomes? How will the evaluation account for all the possible reasons for change?

Analysis. Applicants should provide detailed information on a plan for data analysis, explaining how the various types of data will be analyzed, integrated and how they will be presented.

Report Writing. Annual reports are required of the NRE and applicants should, given their anticipated schedule, state what is expected to be included in each of three annual reports. An Executive Summary will be required at the conclusion of the project and applicants may propose any other products seen as useful for purposes of informing the local projects, the field at large, and the federal program managers.

Organizational Capacity

Applicants must demonstrate organizational capacity to conduct a large-scale national evaluation in rural states. This capacity would be

reflected in the staffing plan, effective and efficient use of consultants and subcontracts, and experience with large-scale evaluation efforts.

IV. How to Apply

Those interested in submitting proposals in response to this solicitation must complete the required application forms and submit related required documents. (See below for how to obtain application forms and guides for completing proposals.) Applicants must include the following information/forms to qualify for funding:

- Standard Form (SF) 424—application for Federal assistance
- Assurances
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (one form)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Budget Detail Worksheet
- Negotiated indirect rate agreement (if appropriate)
- Names and affiliations of all key persons from applicant and subcontractor(s), advisors, consultants, and advisory board members. Include name of principal investigator, title, organizational affiliation (if any), department (if institution of higher education), address, phone, and fax
- Proposal abstract
- Table of contents
- Program narrative or technical proposal
- Privacy certificate
- References
- Letters of cooperation from organizations collaborating in the research project
- Résumés
- Appendixes, if any (e.g., list of previous NIJ awards, their status, and products [in NIJ or other publications])

Proposal abstract. The proposal abstract, when read separately from the rest of the application, is meant to serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants must concisely describe the research goals and

objectives, research design, and methods for achieving the goals and objectives. Summaries of past accomplishments are to be avoided, and proprietary/confidential information is not to be included. Length is not to exceed 400 words. Use the following two headers:

Project Goals and Objectives:

Proposed Research Design and Methodology:

Due date. Completed proposals **must be received** at the National Institute of Justice by the close of business on June 8, 1998. Extensions of this deadline will not be permitted.

Award period. In general, NIJ limits its grants and cooperative agreements to a maximum period of 12 or 24 months. However, a budget period of 36 months is anticipated for this project.

Number of awards. NIJ anticipates supporting one grant under this solicitation.

Award amount. An award totaling \$375,000 in FY 1998 will be made available for this NIJ solicitation. Applicants should submit a budget totaling \$375,000 and the extent of the proposed evaluation should reflect this amount. Applicants should also include a statement on the additional work that would be completed with supplemental funding up to \$325,000 which would be made available given continued program appropriations. The proposal should be clear on how much of the proposed task plan will be completed with the initial funding of \$375,000, and also provide a clear understanding of the entire task plan to be addressed with the total \$700,000 over the three years.

Applying. Two packets need to be obtained: (1) application forms (including a sample budget worksheet) and (2) guidelines for submitting proposals (including requirements for proposal writers and requirements for grant recipients). To receive them, applicants can:

- Access the Justice Information Center on the Web: <http://www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.htm#NIJ>. At this site, the NIJ application forms and guidelines are available as electronic files that may be downloaded to a personal computer.
- Request hard copies of the forms and guidelines by mail from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 800–851–3420 or from the Department of Justice Response Center at 800–421–6770 (in the Washington, D.C., area, at 202–307–1480).
- Request copies by fax. Call 800–851–3420 and select option 1, then option 1 again for NIJ. Code is 1023.

Guidance and information. Applicants who wish to receive additional guidance and information may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800–421–6770. Center staff can provide assistance or refer applicants to an appropriate NIJ professional. Applicants may, for example, wish to discuss their prospective research topics with the NIJ professional staff.

Send 10 copies of completed forms (one with original signature) to:
National Evaluation of the Rural Domestic
Violence & Child Victimization Enforcement
Grant Program
National Institute of Justice
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531
[overnight courier ZIP code 20001]

CURRENT RURAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILD VICTIMIZATION

ENFORCEMENT GRANT RECIPIENTS

STATE	GRANTEE
ALASKA	State of Alaska- Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
	Alaska Legal Services Corporation
ARIZONA	State of Arizona - Division for Women
	Navajo Nation
ARKANSAS	Crisis Center for Battered Women
CALIFORNIA	Inter-Tribal Council of California, Inc.
	State of California - Office of Criminal Justice Planning
COLORADO	City of Woodland Park and County of Teller
DELAWARE	State of Delaware - Delaware Criminal Justice Council
FLORIDA	State of Florida - Governor's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence
HAWAII	State of Hawaii - Department of the Attorney General
IDAHO	Bonner County Homeless Task Force
	Idaho Migrant Council, Inc.
	Twin Falls County
IOWA	Council on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Aid Center
KANSAS	Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence
KENTUCKY	Kentucky Justice Cabinet
MAINE	Maine Department of Human Services
	Maine General Hospital
MASSACHUSETTS	Commonwealth of Massachusetts - Department of Public Health
MICHIGAN	Michigan Family Independence Agency
MISSISSIPPI	State of Mississippi - Division of Public Safety and Planning
MONTANA	Missoula County
	City of Bozeman

NEVADA	Mineral County Sheriff's Department
NEW HAMPSHIRE	State of New Hampshire - Department of Justice
NEW MEXICO	Albuquerque Area Indian Health Board
	Pueblo of Zuni
	Torrance County
NORTH CAROLINA	Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
NORTH DAKOTA	North Dakota Council on Abused Women
OKLAHOMA	McCurtain County Education Co-op
OREGON	Lower Umpqua Victim Services
	Josephine County
SOUTH DAKOTA	Cheyenne River Sioux Nation
TEXAS	State of Texas - Office of the Governor
UTAH	City of Provo
VERMONT	State of Vermont - Center for Crime Victim Services
	Franklin County Sheriff's Department
	Women Helping Battered Women
WASHINGTON	Lower Elwa Klallam Tribe
	Makah Tribal Council
	State of Washington - Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development
WEST VIRGINIA	Criminal Justice and Highway Safety Division
WISCONSIN	State of Wisconsin - Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance
WYOMING	Teton County Task Force

For more information on the National Institute of Justice, please contact:

National Criminal Justice Reference Service

Box 6000

Rockville, MD 20849-6000

800-851-3420

e-mail: askncjrs@ncjrs.org

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